

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 ORM-02 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /073 W
-----230316Z 068335 /70

R 221337Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5828
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: IS, JO, 0\$3;, PFOR
SUBJECT: MFA OFFICIAL COMMENTS ON MES'HA SETTLEMENT

REF: TEL AVIV 2769

1. IN DISCUSSING WITH EMBOFF ON APRIL 20 THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN ISRAELI SETTLEMENT ESTABLISHED AT MES'HA, THE MFA'S REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE TERRITORIES (GONEN) SAID THAT THE MOST SIGNIFICANT FACT ABOUT THE SETTLEMENT WAS THAT IT WAS THE FIRST "NEAR THE GREEN LINE" IN THAT AREA (THE NORTHERN PART OF THE WEST BANK). REFERRING TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S ENDORSEMENT OF "MINOR MODIFICATIONS," HE IMPLIED THAT MES'HA IS VIEWED IN THIS FRAMEWORK BY THE GOI.

2. THE EMBOFF'S REMAK THAT THERE HAD BEEN PREVIOUS UNAUTHORIZED SETTLEMENTS, PARTICULARLY QADUM, GONEN RESPONDED THAT HE WAS ONLY TALKING ABOUT AUTHORIZED SETTLEMENTS. HE ADDED THAT HE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF, AFTER THE ELECTIONS, A NEW ISRAELI GOVERNMENT WOULD OFFER THE MES'HA SITE TO SETTLERS NOW
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LOCATED AT QADUM. TO EMBOFF'S QUESTION WHETHER THERE ARE PRESENTLY AN INTERNAL GOVERNMENTAL DISCUSSIONS ON THIS OPTION, GONEN REPLIED THAT HE DID NOT THINK SO.

3. SPEAKING FOR HIMSELF, GONEN SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THERE WAS A PROBABILITY THAT THERE WOULD BE LAND CONFISCATIONS "WITH PAID COMPENSATION, OF COURSE" IN

THE MES'HA AREA. IN ADDITION TO LAND, THE ISRAELIS ARE ALSO GIVING SOME THOUGHT TO FUTURE WATER SUPPLIES FOR MES'HA, GONEN INDICATED. MES'HA WOULD BE A MIXED URBAN-AGRICULTURAL SITE, HE SAID.

4. COMMENT:GONEN'S ANTICIPATION OF LAND CONFISCATIONS AT MES'HA TENDS TO CONFIRM OUR EARLIER REPORT (TEL AVIV 2724).

5.. THE GUSH EMUNIM HAVE PREVIOUSLY STATED THAT THERE ARE SEPARATE, DISTINCT NUCLEI FOR THE QADUM AND MES'HA STIES. IT IS DIFFICULT TO FORESEE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THEY MIGHT BE PERSUADED TO LEAVE QADUM, EVEN AFTER THE ELECTIONS.

6. THE LOCAL PRESS APRIL 22 CITED STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS AS COMPLAINING THAT THE GOI APPROVAL OF SETTLEMENT AT MES'HA WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL TO PEACE EFFORTS.

7. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR LEE HAS TOLD US IN CONFIDENCE THAT AT A LUNCH WITH MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL AVINERI ON APRIL 20, HE EXPRESSED "CONCERN, DISPLEASURE AND SURPRISE" AT THE NEWS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SETTLEMENT. HE SAID HE WAS EXPRESSING A PERSONAL OPINION BUT ONE WHICH HE FELT SURE WOULD BE SHARED IN OTTAWA. (AVINERI IS GOING TO CANADA FOLLOWING HIS VISIT TO THE U.S. NEXT WEEK.) HE SAID HE WAS PARTICULARLY SURPRISED AT THE TIMING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF THE MOVE AND SAID THAT ISRAEL COULD NOT EXPECT ANY SUPPORT FROM CANADA IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL IF THE SUBJECT WERE TO BE DISCUSSED THERE.LEE SAID AVINERI ACKNOWLEDGED ALL THIS AND SAID THAT ON A PERSONAL BASIS HE FELT IT HAD BEEN A WRONG DECISION; HE ADDED THAT HE BELIEVED THAT ALLON FELT THE SAME WAY BUT HAD BEEN OVERRULED WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT. DUNNIGAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAND SETTLEMENT, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 22-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977TELAV02842
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770141-0837
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770427/aaaaawwr.tel
Line Count: 105
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fef616a0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 TEL AVIV 2769
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2716361
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MFA OFFICIAL COMMENTS ON MES'HA SETTLEMENT
TAGS: PFOR, PDEV, IS, JO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fef616a0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009